

A CLASSIC FAIRY TALE

Beauty and the Beast



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'''VAN GOOL'S'''

Beauty and the Beast



TWIN BOOKS

Once upon a time there lived a wealthy merchant who had three daughters. They lived a comfortable life in a mansion by the sea. While two of his daughters wasted their father's money on extravagant clothing, the youngest daughter, Beauty, helped the family as much as she could, dressing simply and working hard at her chores.

One day the daughters overheard gentlemen in the courtyard, saying that the merchant's ships had sunk in a storm. "He's got nothing left," said one of them, shaking his head, "he's ruined!"







To save his business and his fortune, the desperate merchant traveled the next day to a big city. He asked the bankers there if he could borrow money, but the bankers refused.



Sadly, the merchant began his long trip home. He hardly noticed the falling snow as he thought about his daughters. As he had left to see the bankers, the eldest two had asked for jewels and gowns. Beauty had asked for a single rose.

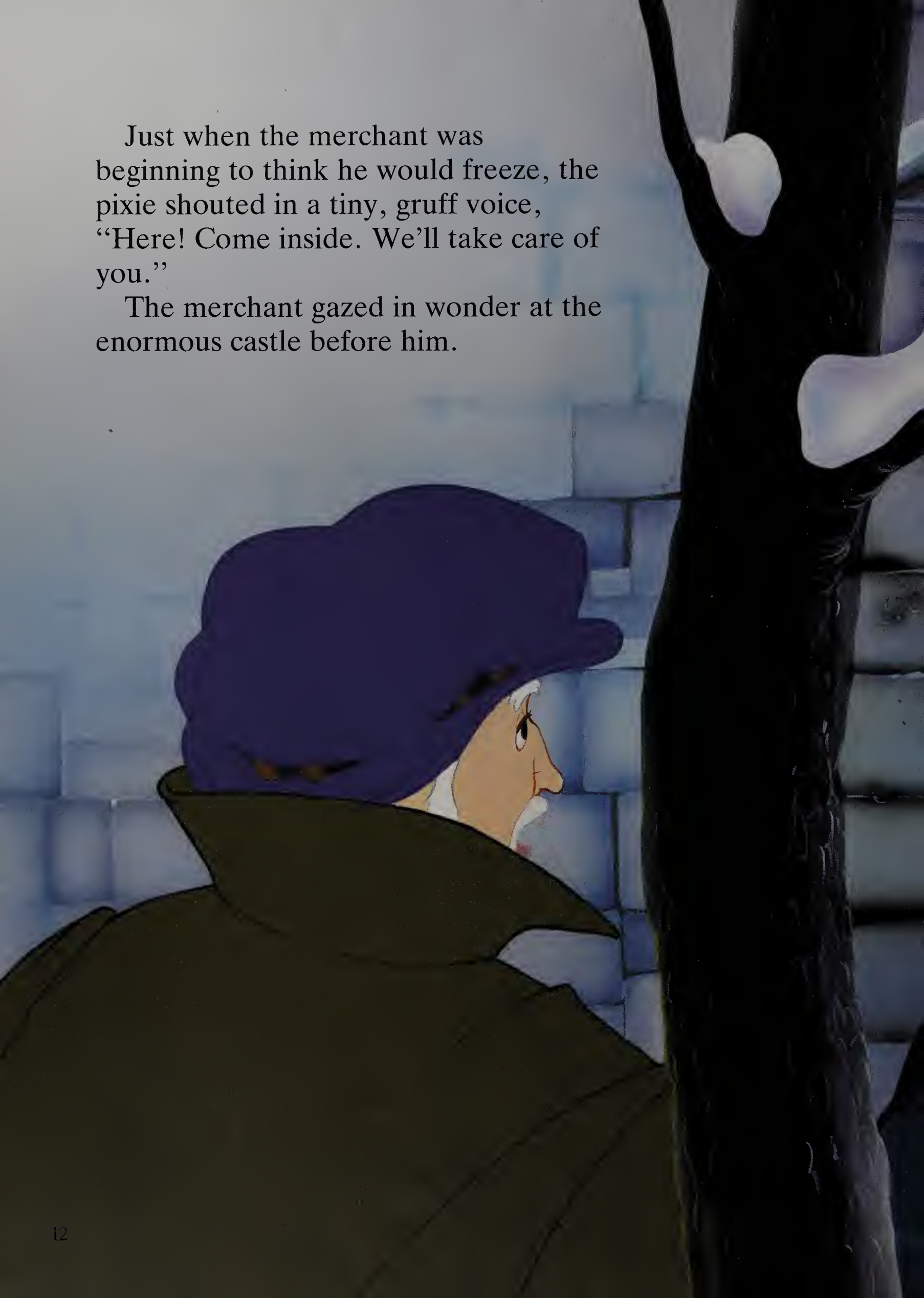




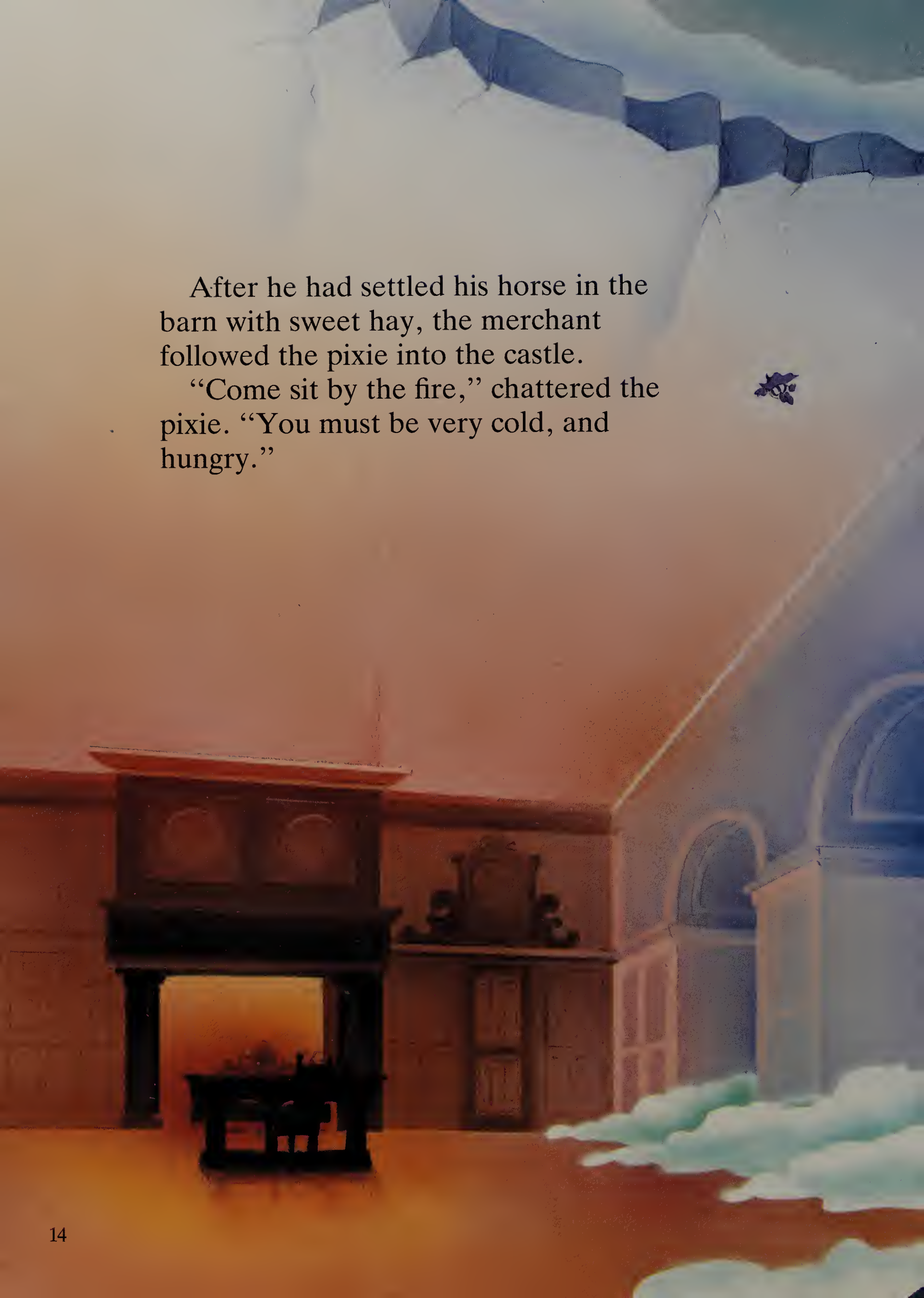
The merchant forgot his dismay at not being able to fulfill his daughters' wishes, and his worry over his lost fortune, when the snowfall turned into a blizzard. Icy winds whipped snow at the merchant and his horse. Soon he was so lost that when a mysterious flying pixie appeared, and summoned for him to follow, the merchant trailed along behind.

Just when the merchant was beginning to think he would freeze, the pixie shouted in a tiny, gruff voice, “Here! Come inside. We’ll take care of you.”

The merchant gazed in wonder at the enormous castle before him.







After he had settled his horse in the barn with sweet hay, the merchant followed the pixie into the castle.

“Come sit by the fire,” chattered the pixie. “You must be very cold, and hungry.”




As the merchant approached the table before the cheerfully blazing fireplace, he was amazed to see a sumptuous banquet appear in a twinkling of magic. “Eat!” exclaimed the pixie, chuckling at the man’s surprise.


“Thank you so much for your kindness,” said the merchant gratefully. He sat and ate until he could eat no more.



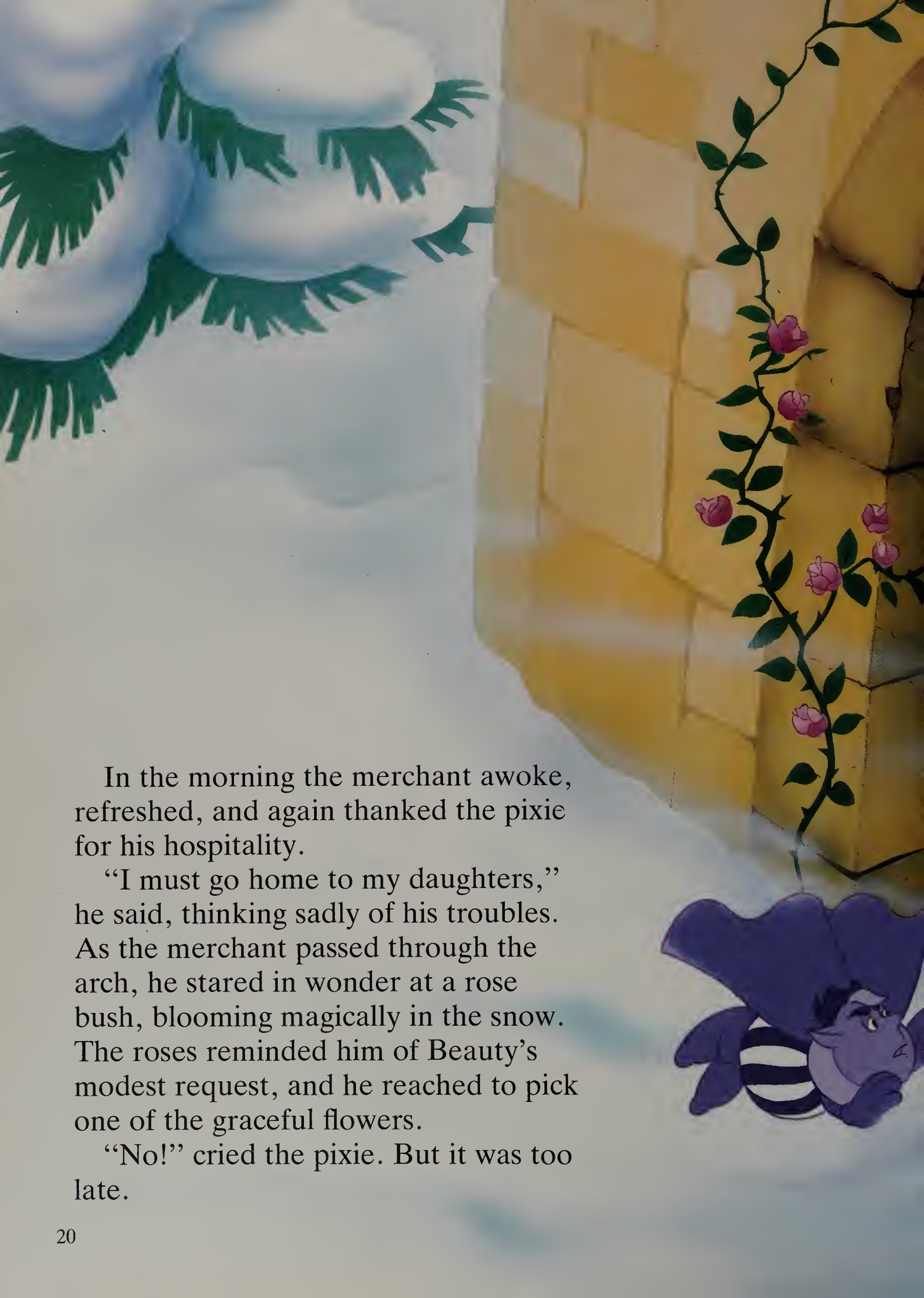




Then, feeling full and warm, the exhausted merchant fell asleep at the table. Even the pixie, warmed by the crackling fire, dozed off into a dreamless sleep. As they slept, a great hulking figure watched silently from the balcony.





The background of the page is a soft, light blue and white illustration. In the upper left, there are stylized white snowflakes or clouds with green, feathery branches. On the right side, a yellow stone wall with rectangular blocks is visible. A dark green vine with small leaves and several pink roses grows vertically along the wall. In the bottom right corner, a small, purple, winged creature with a striped body is peeking out from behind the wall.

In the morning the merchant awoke, refreshed, and again thanked the pixie for his hospitality.

“I must go home to my daughters,” he said, thinking sadly of his troubles. As the merchant passed through the arch, he stared in wonder at a rose bush, blooming magically in the snow. The roses reminded him of Beauty’s modest request, and he reached to pick one of the graceful flowers.

“No!” cried the pixie. But it was too late.





Suddenly an enormous Beast appeared. “Is this how you repay my kindness—by stealing my precious roses?” thundered the angry creature. “For this you shall die!”

“I-I’m sorry,” stammered the merchant. “It was for my daughter.”

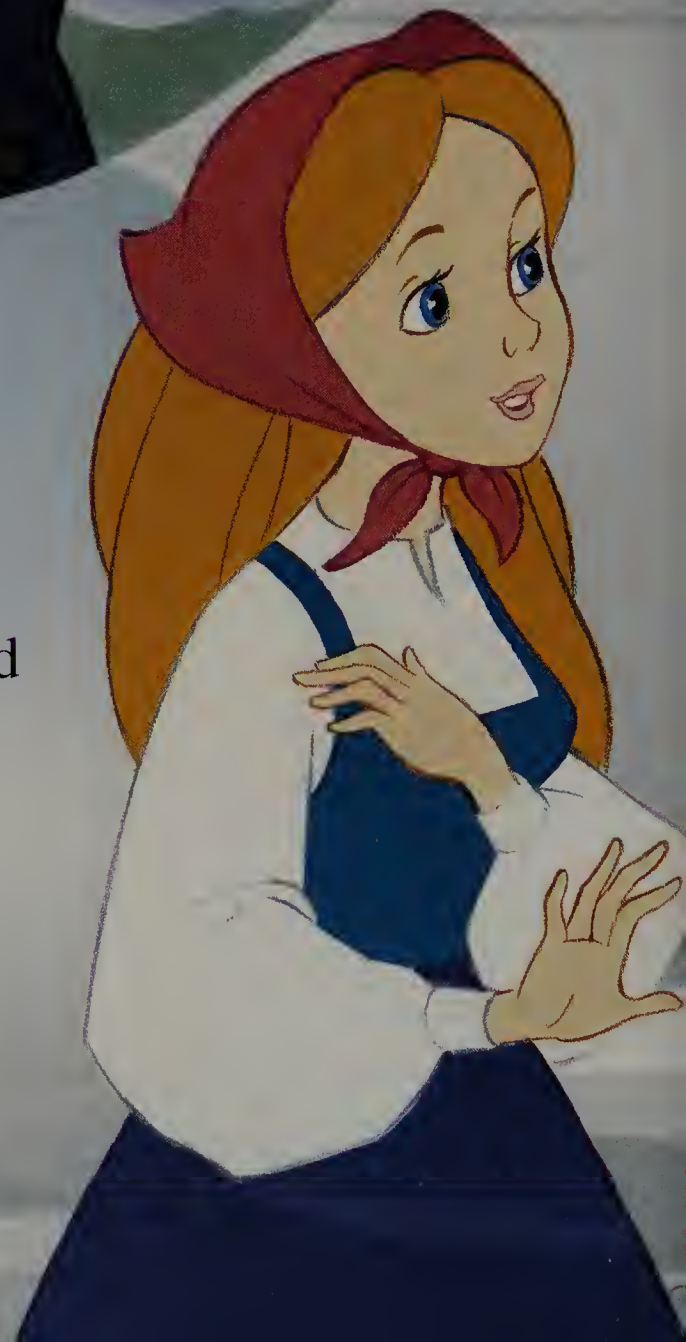
“Your daughter?” replied the Beast gruffly. “If she loves you, she will come here to take your place. But if she does not, then you yourself must return within three months. Now go!”





The poor merchant promised to return — what else could he do? Then he rode home, his heart heavy with sorrow.

But when he arrived at his home and gave Beauty the rose, her happiness cheered him. “Ah, Beauty,” he said ruefully. “If only you knew what this rose cost.” And he told his wondering daughters his story about the Beast’s castle, and of the monster’s terrible demand.





“I will go in your place, Father!” cried Beauty. “I would rather be the Beast’s prisoner than have you die for me.”

“I’ll hear no more of that!” replied the merchant firmly. “I shall return in three months.”

Beauty’s sisters glared angrily at her.

Three months passed quickly, and on the last morning, Beauty, carrying her shoes, quietly slipped out of the mansion.





She saddled and mounted her father's patient horse and bade a silent farewell to her sleeping family. She knew she would miss them terribly, but felt strong in her resolve to save her father's life.

“Besides,” she thought bravely. “Perhaps I can change the Beast's mind.”





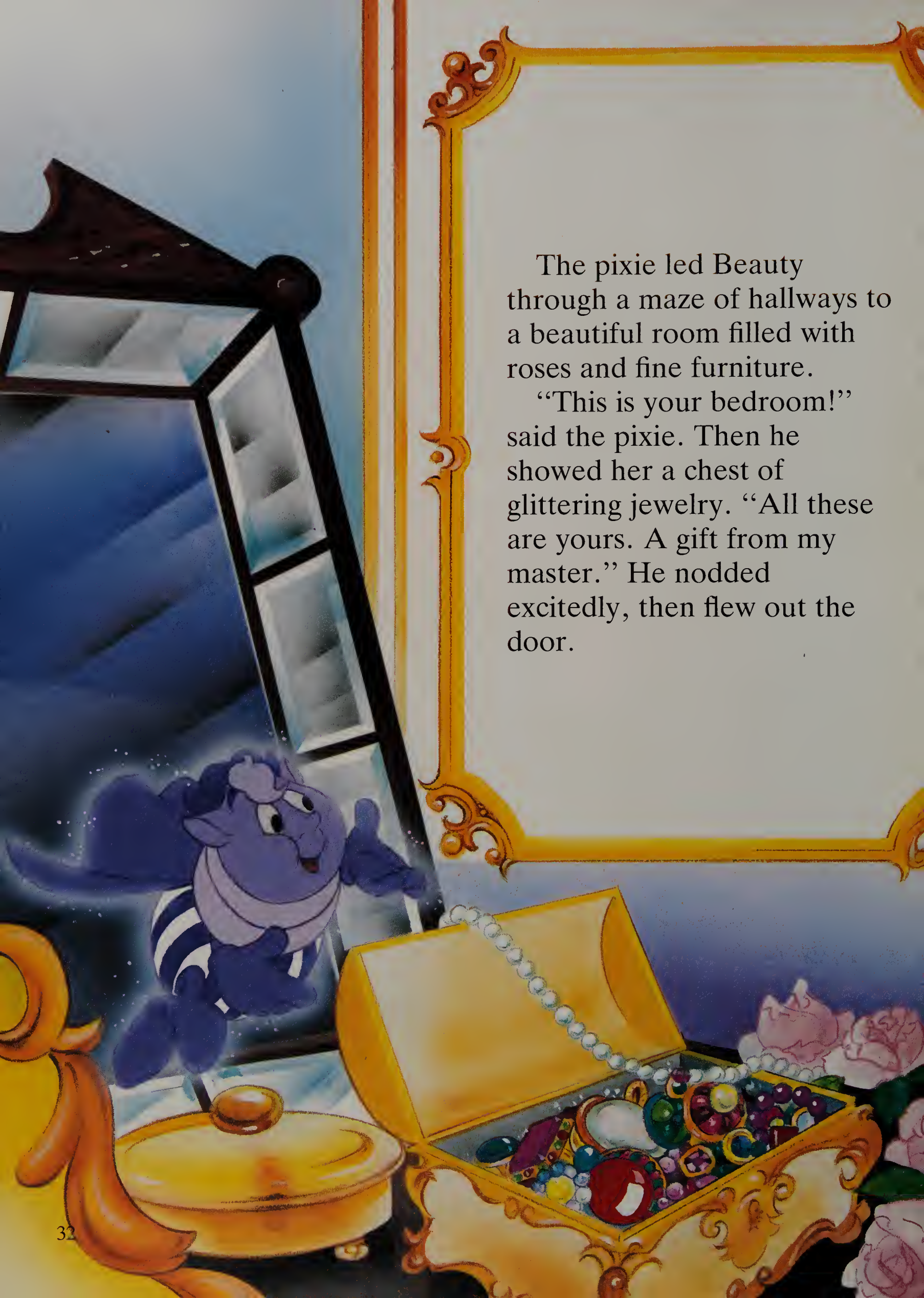


Beauty arrived at the Beast's castle at nightfall, after the long journey. The pixie appeared as she entered the courtyard.

"Welcome, Beauty! Follow me . . . right this way," he exclaimed. He seemed to have been expecting her.

Beauty followed him into the castle.






The pixie led Beauty through a maze of hallways to a beautiful room filled with roses and fine furniture.

“This is your bedroom!” said the pixie. Then he showed her a chest of glittering jewelry. “All these are yours. A gift from my master.” He nodded excitedly, then flew out the door.





Beauty explored the room, gazing in wonder at the roses, the jewels, the furniture, the closet filled with beautiful clothing. She took off her simple traveling clothes and tried on an elegant gown.

Suddenly the pixie appeared again. "Oh, you look marvelous!" he sputtered. "My master will be so pleased. Just look at yourself in the mirror!"







Beauty gasped in horror. Behind her own reflection in the mirror, she saw the hideous Beast. She whirled around to face him.

“Welcome to my castle,” said the Beast. “Have you come willingly?”

“Yes, I have,” replied Beauty.

“You must be hungry after your long trip,” he said hoarsely. “Come with me.”



The Beast led Beauty to the enormous living room, where a table had been set for one. Although she felt relieved that she wouldn't have to eat with the frightful Beast, Beauty was touched by his kindness. He bade her good-night, and she ate her dinner. Then she stared at the fire and thought about the Beast, wondering about the strange and magical place.





The next night the Beast came to see Beauty as she wandered in the garden.

“Do you think I’m ugly?” he asked, leaning toward her.

“Yes,” replied Beauty honestly. “But I think you are good.”

“Would you marry me?” asked the Beast.

Startled by his unexpected question, Beauty answered, “no!”

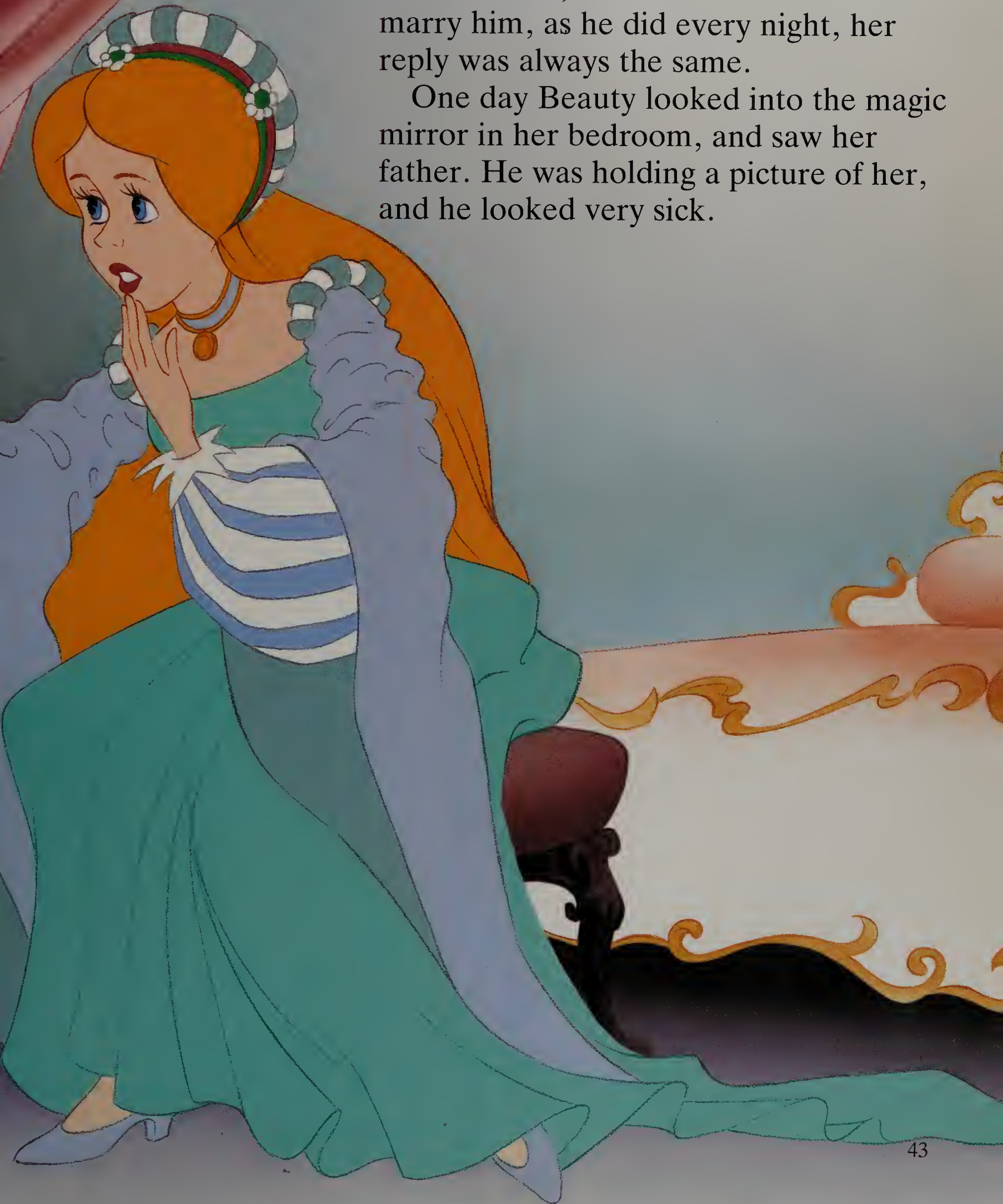






Every day the Beast came to see Beauty, and they talked. She became less afraid of him, but when he asked her to marry him, as he did every night, her reply was always the same.

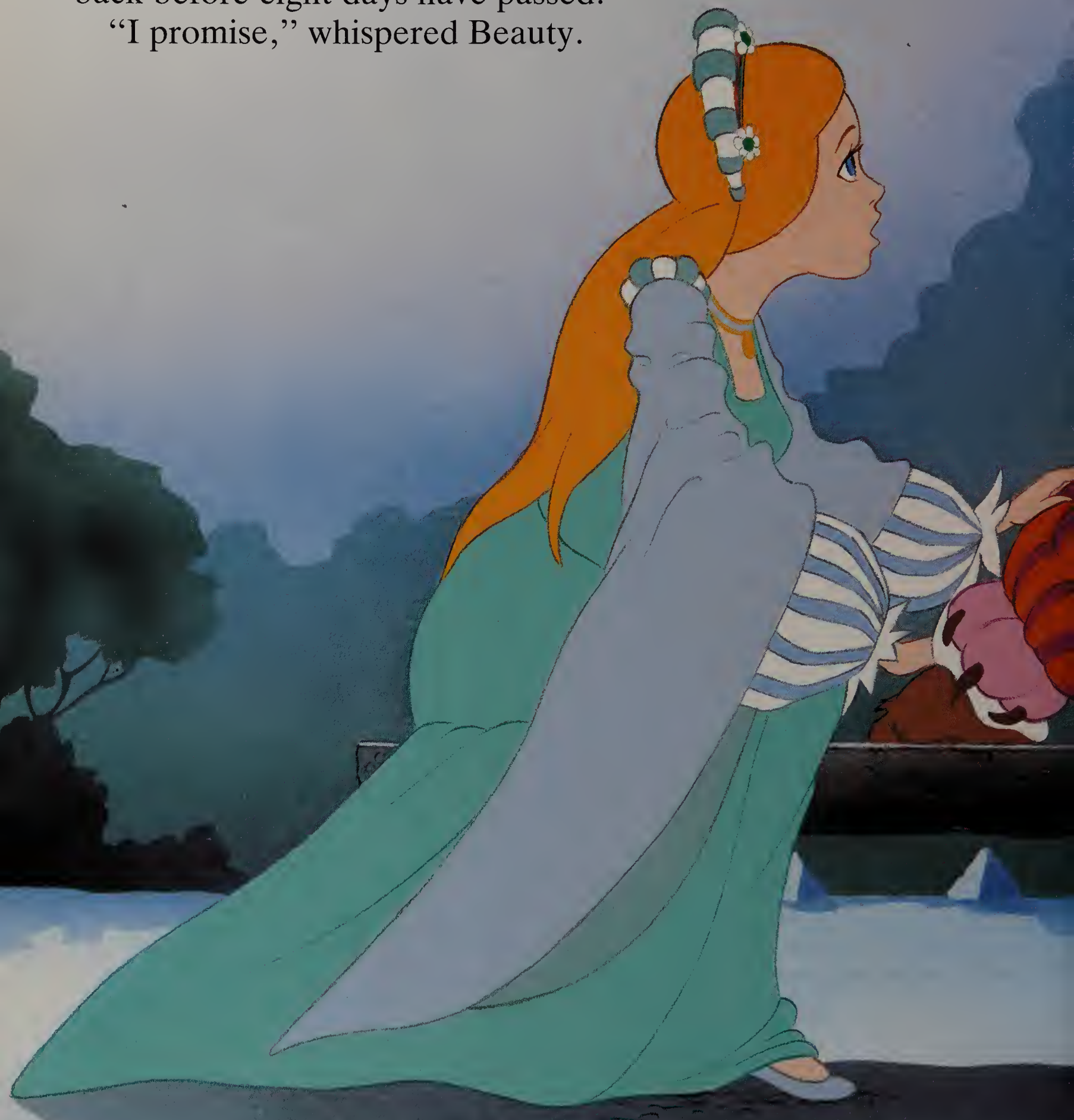
One day Beauty looked into the magic mirror in her bedroom, and saw her father. He was holding a picture of her, and he looked very sick.



Beauty ran to find the Beast. “You must let me go!” she cried. “Please, I know you are kind and good. My father is sick and needs me.”

“Then go,” said the Beast quietly. “But promise to come back before eight days have passed.”

“I promise,” whispered Beauty.





Beauty rode home as fast as her horse would go.

“Father!” she cried, hurrying into the mansion.

“Beauty! You are alive and well!” exclaimed her father, hugging her tightly. “The evil Beast didn’t hurt you.”

“No, Father,” replied Beauty. “He’s only a monster on the outside. Inside he is generous and sweet. But how are you?”

“I shall be fine, now that I know you are well,” said her father, smiling.





The days passed quickly, and on the seventh night, the pixie came to Beauty while she was sleeping. He whispered in her ear, and Beauty dreamed that the Beast, forlorn and alone, waited for her, his desperate hope that she would return slowly fading.







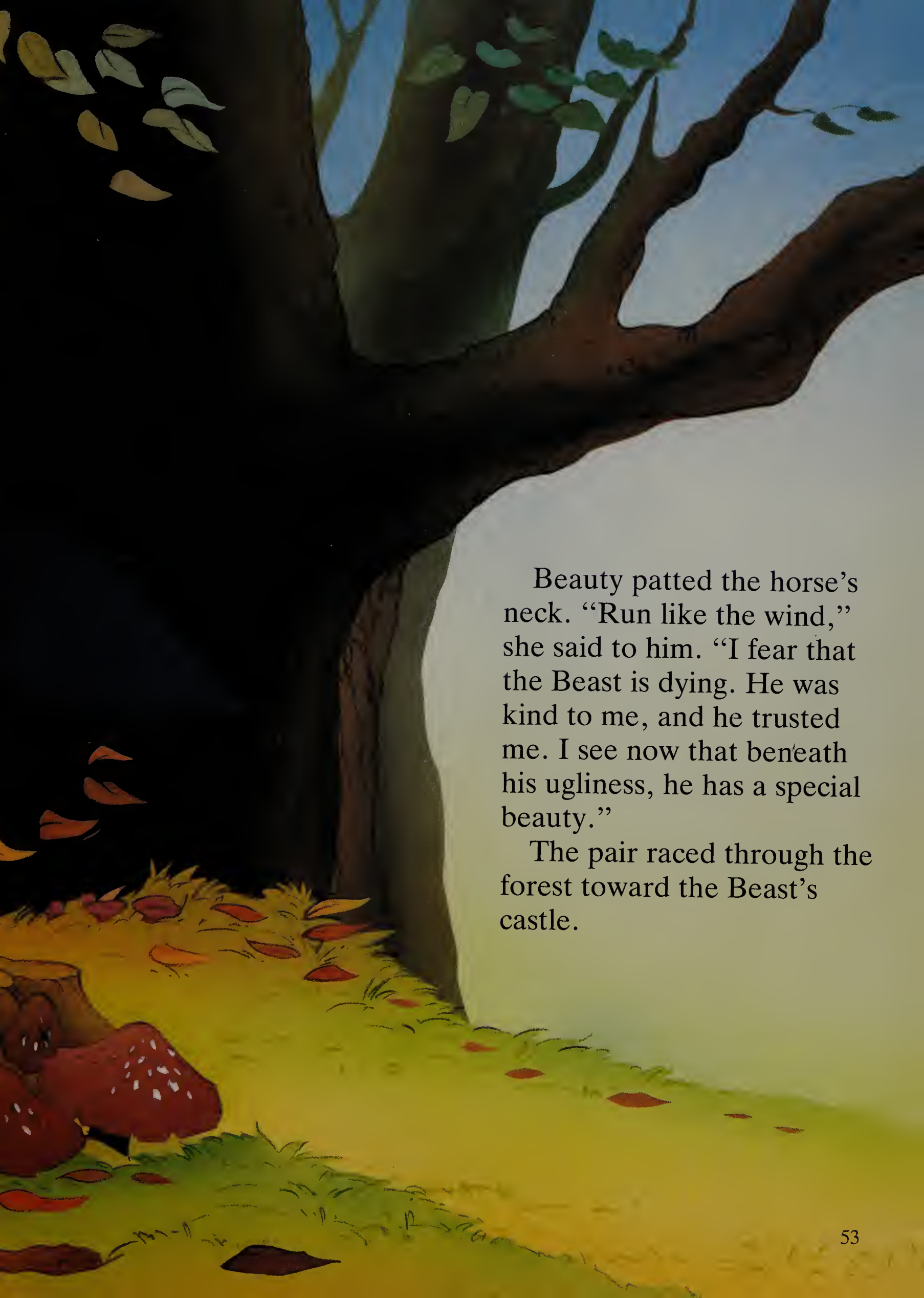
In the morning, Beauty told her father and sisters that she must return to the Beast's castle, as she had promised. Her sisters, jealous of her fine gown and jewelry, tried to keep her from going.

But Beauty waited until they were busy . . .

. . . then she slipped outside. "The Beast needs me," she thought. "I must go to him."







Beauty patted the horse's neck. "Run like the wind," she said to him. "I fear that the Beast is dying. He was kind to me, and he trusted me. I see now that beneath his ugliness, he has a special beauty."

The pair raced through the forest toward the Beast's castle.



When Beauty arrived at the castle, and couldn't find the Beast, she was frightened. "Beast!" she called. "Where are you?"

Then a tiny voice called, "This way, Beauty! Follow me." It was the pixie. Beauty followed him, and found the Beast lying the courtyard.

"Beauty," he whispered. "I'm so happy to see you once more before I die."







“You can’t die, Beast!” cried Beauty. She kneeled and kissed his cheek. “I love you,” she whispered. “I want to marry you.”

The Beast closed his eyes. Suddenly the courtyard was filled with a brilliant light. Magic filled the air.





Beauty looked in astonishment at the handsome Prince before her. “Where is my precious Beast?” she asked.

“Here he is,” replied the Prince. “Your love has broken the evil spell that made me the Beast. I love you, Beauty.”





“Your love has made me very happy,” said Beauty, smiling.

“All this is ours to share,” said the Prince, gesturing to the castle. Beauty knew her family would never be poor again.

Beautiful music filled the air as the two gazed at each other, thinking of the happiness they would share forever after.

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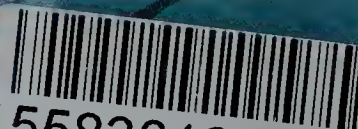
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